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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 006928

SENSITIVE
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E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/22/2020

TAGS: PGOV PREL EAID YM

SUBJECT: DEMARCHE REQUEST: USG POLICY TOWARD YEMEN AND
PLANS FOR UPCOMING LONDON MEETING ON YEMEN

Classified By: NEA Acting A/S Ronald Schlicher for reasons
1.4 (b) and (d).

¶11. (U) This is an action request. For Ankara, Beijing, Berlin, Brussels (USEU), the Hague, Madrid, Moscow, Ottawa, Paris, Rome, and Tokyo, please see paragraph 10. For Bahrain, Doha, Kuwait, and Muscat, please see paragraph 11. For Abu Dhabi and Riyadh, please see paragraph 12. For Amman and Cairo, please see paragraph 13.

¶12. (C) SUMMARY: In advance of the January 27 ministerial meeting on Yemen in London, the Department requests that posts demarche invited governments to explain USG efforts in Yemen, goals for the London meeting, and future multilateral efforts. The goals for the meeting will be to: 1) raise the level of public attention on Yemen, 2) confirm both international support for Yemen and international expectations of Yemen, and 3) identify help for Yemen to secure its borders, maintain its territorial unity, provide for its people, resolve internal disputes through dialogue, and support necessary economic and political reforms to achieve these ends. We expect this meeting to lead to the establishment of a "Friends of Yemen" mechanism, including two working groups, to help Yemen begin to address these existential issues that make it a breeding ground for Al-Qaida and create the potential for eventual state failure.
END SUMMARY.

BACKGROUND

¶13. (SBU) On January 1, UK PM Gordon Brown announced an international meeting on Yemen to take place on January 27 to consolidate international support for Yemen in order to help the country deal with its various crises that threaten the integrity of the state and make it an inviting safe haven for Al-Qaida and related groups. The Department has been heavily engaged with the United Kingdom in order to shape the meeting

and its desired outcomes.

¶4. (SBU) The UK has delivered invitations to the event via demarches in host capitals, and inquiries as to invitations and logistical details should be referred to HMG. The current list of invitees are: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, UAE, U.S., UK, Canada, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Egypt, Jordan, Germany, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain (EU President), Turkey, Russia, China, and Japan; as well as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, United Nations, and the Gulf Cooperation Council Secretariat.

¶5. (SBU) The goals for the meeting are to: 1) raise the level of public attention on Yemen, 2) confirm both international support for Yemen and international expectations of Yemen, and 3) release a Chairman's statement, which will include a joint commitment to identify help for Yemen to secure its borders, maintain its territorial unity, provide for its people, resolve internal disputes through dialogue, and support necessary economic and political reforms to achieve these ends. We and the UK see this meeting as the start of a process aimed at encouraging and supporting a renewed focus on Yemen, to include a "Friends of Yemen" mechanism that will coordinate technical and economic assistance, create incentives for reform, enhance multilateral institutional efforts, and consider increased assistance to Yemen. The London event is not a pledging conference.

¶6. (SBU) The meeting will take place from 4:00) 6:00 pm on January 27. There will likely be a luncheon hosted by FM Miliband for the GCC states, Yemen, and the U.S. earlier in the afternoon. The details and participation at the luncheon are still being worked out. The meeting agenda will be divided into three parts: 1) problems/challenges facing Yemen, 2) Yemen's political and economic reform agenda, and 3) a discussion of how the international community can coordinate its response to help Yemen with its reform agenda to face these problems and challenges.

¶7. (C) Following the meeting we expect to announce the establishment of two working groups comprised of members of the "Friends of Yemen," which will focus on 1) economic and governance issues and 2) rule of law and law enforcement. We will also continue to work in secret with the UK, Saudi Arabia, and UAE on more sensitive efforts to assist Yemen.

¶8. (SBU) A follow-on "Friends" meeting will take place in March after the working groups have had sufficient time to produce results that could be highlighted at this future meeting. We will look to convince one of Yemen's Gulf neighbors to host this next meeting. The "Friends" and constituent working groups will look to put concrete proposals on the table that support the Yemeni government and encourage reform; this is not a talk shop and the United States is not looking for regular meetings on the European conference circuit.

¶9. (SBU) In advance of the meeting, posts are requested to demarche host governments at the highest appropriate level to explain the current U.S. policy toward Yemen, our goals for the January 27 event, and our desire to work with these respective nations on international efforts to stabilize Yemen.

TALKING POINTS

¶10. (C/REL) For Ankara, Beijing, Berlin, Brussels (USEU), the Hague, Madrid, Moscow, Ottawa, Paris, Rome, and Tokyo:

-- The January 27 meeting in London comes at a moment of intense international focus on and concern about Yemen. Yemen was the source of the explosive and travel origin of the bomber that attempted to destroy NWA flight #253 over Detroit on Christmas Day. While we have been aware of the threat posed by Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) for

some time, and have been supporting the government of Yemen to combat that threat, the belief was that this affiliate's activities were largely concentrated on the Arabian Peninsula and not a direct threat outside of the region.

-- We have been paying close attention to Yemen for some time, and the National Security Council (NSC) began a policy review of Yemen in the spring of 2009. The United States is in the midst of a multi-year process of ramping up base levels of both security and development assistance to the country as our engagement with them increases. At the same time, many of Yemen's problems are home-grown and a result of President Saleh's style of governing. Yemen is in dire need of assistance, but the international community needs to ensure that such assistance is not misappropriated or misspent. We also need to work to build the technical capacity of the Yemeni state so that it can be a better recipient of assistance, better deliver services to the Yemeni people, and better protect the fundamental rights of its citizens.

-- The London meeting will not focus on counter terrorism issues, but instead provides a unique opportunity to shape the international attention on Yemen in a productive fashion -- to reiterate support for Yemen and its government to encourage better management of various internal crises, while at the same time making clear that the international community cannot help Yemen unless it takes necessary steps to reform its economy and political structures.

-- We would also encourage you to discuss with the World Bank and IMF how these institutions can more effectively engage in Yemen. We wish to increase the effectiveness of the World Bank's presence and activity in Yemen as well as the Consultative Group (the Sana'a-based donor coordination group) it chairs. This group will work on the ground in Sana'a to monitor and support reform efforts and international development assistance efforts.

¶11. (C/REL) For Bahrain, Doha, Kuwait, and Muscat:

-- As we have discussed with you in bilateral settings and multilateral fora (including with the Secretary of State at the GCC 3 meetings in New York in September 2009 and in Morocco in November 2009), Yemen's instability is an increasing threat to the region and, as evidenced by the December 25 attempted bombing of a U.S. jetliner, the United States as well.

-- We hope that the GCC, as Yemen's neighbors, will take the lead in helping this country resolve its internal political crises through dialogue with the Houthi rebels in the north and the nascent secessionist movement in the south, and concerted economic reform that includes combating corruption and improving the business climate.

-- We also hope that you will both privately and publicly offer support to President Saleh and the people of Yemen in their fight against Al-Qaida. While Yemeni counter terrorism activity and cooperation have been strong in recent months, we are concerned that Saleh's willingness to target AQAP will wane if domestic opposition paints Saleh as a pawn of the United States for these actions. Public Arab support to Yemen's counter-terrorism activities may help Saleh weather internal criticisms in this regard.

-- We also need to work to build the technical capacity of the Yemeni state so that it can be a better recipient of assistance, better deliver services to the Yemeni people, and better protect the fundamental rights of its citizens.

-- We look forward to discussing these efforts further at the luncheon hosted by FM Miliband on January 27 and with the larger group later that afternoon.

¶12. (C/REL) For Abu Dhabi and Riyadh:

-- We look forward to continued consultations with you as

part of the private group of four. It will be useful for the United States, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and the United Kingdom to continue to discreetly coordinate policies and efforts regarding Yemen, including providing direction and impetus to larger multilateral efforts. We found the four-party consultations in London January 19 very productive.

-- We would like to encourage your government to announce its public support to the "Friends of Yemen" process, to include a GCC capital hosting the next meeting of the group later in 2010, after the working groups have made progress in their efforts.

-- We need to find a mechanism to bring the Houthi conflict to an end as it continues to drain resources and the attention of the Yemeni and regional governments. We want to work with you in this effort, and should do so now privately before international attention on Yemen internationalizes the conflict.

-- We also hope that you can continue to privately and publicly offer support to President Saleh and the people of Yemen in their fight against Al-Qaida. While Yemeni counter terrorism activity and cooperation have been strong in recent months, we are concerned that Saleh's willingness to target AQAP will wane if domestic opposition paints Saleh as a pawn of the United States for these actions. Public Arab support for Yemen's counter-terrorism activities may help Saleh weather internal criticisms in this regard.

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-- We look forward to discussing these efforts further at the luncheon hosted by FM Miliband on January 27 with the GCC and Yemen and with the larger group later that afternoon.

¶13. (C/REL) For Amman and Cairo:

-- As we have discussed with you in bilateral settings and multilateral fora (including with the Secretary at the GCC 3 meetings in New York in September 2009 and in Morocco in November 2009), Yemen's instability is an increasing threat to the region and, as evidenced by the December 25 attempted bombing of a U.S. jetliner, the United States as well.

-- The meeting on January 27 in London comes at a moment of intense international focus on and concern about Yemen. While we have been aware of the threat posed by Al-Qaida of the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) for some time, and have been supporting the government of Yemen to combat that threat, the belief was that this affiliate's activities were largely concentrated on the Arabian Peninsula and not a direct threat outside of the region.

-- We have been paying close attention to Yemen for some time, and the National Security Council (NSC) began a policy review of Yemen in the spring of 2009. The United States is in the midst of a multi-year process of ramping up base levels of both security and development assistance to the country as our engagement with them increases. At the same time, many of Yemen's problems are home grown and a result of President Saleh's style of governing. Yemen is in dire need of assistance, but the international community needs to ensure that such assistance is not misappropriated or misspent.

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(Note: At this time we are not contemplating using any USG funding for third-party transfers or third-party training. End Note).

End Talking Points.

¶14. (U) Posts are requested to report the results of this demarche no later than January 25, 2010. Please also report expected host government attendance at the meeting on the 27th. Please slug responses to NEA/ARP Andrew MacDonald, who is the POC for this demarche: macdonaldat@state.gov, 202-647-6558.

END TEXT.
CLINTON